

Media, PA —Months before approximately 4000 of their troops leave for Iraq for an early 2009 deployment, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) presented the Soldiers of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard's 28th Infantry Division (Mechanized) with a Congressional Citation. Brigadier General Jerry Beck, who supervises all combat units as the Deputy Commander, received the award on behalf of his division at a ceremony on Saturday. The Congressman recognized the division's members, many of whom are from the Seventh Congressional District, for their extraordinary contributions to the efforts of our Armed Forces.

"One of the things that makes this country great is that we continue to produce individuals like the men and women of your division who put country before self to defend our nation and its ideals," said Congressman Sestak. "I am honored to be a part of this ceremony and have the chance to express my personal gratitude for your patriotism."

The 28th Infantry Division, which traces its lineage back to Ben Franklin's day, is both the oldest division in the Army and the most deployed. Since September 11, 2001, more than 10,000 of their troops have gone overseas, including members currently in Afghanistan. Training for their upcoming mission in Iraq is scheduled to begin in September at Camp Shelby in Mississippi, with deployment in January. In addition, 1000 more troops will be mobilized in February and are scheduled to depart for Iraq next spring.

In the citation, the Congressman extolled the troops for their courageous service, saying "You quickly adapted to the unique threats and challenges of combat operation in Iraq and Afghanistan, proving that you are not only the Army's oldest division, but also one of its very best. All Pennsylvanians and indeed all Americans wish you Godspeed on your deployment and a safe return."

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking

former military officer ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

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